

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 220731 TOSEC 260127

NODIS

FOLLOWING ATHENS 9374 SENT ACTION SECSTATE SEPTEMBER 3:

QUOTE S E C R E T ATHENS 9374

NODIS

PLEASE PASS WHITE HOUSE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, GR, TU

SUBJECT: GREEK-TURKISH AEGEAN TENSIONS: COMMENTS BY ARCH-BISHOP IAKOVOS

REF: ATHENS 9265

1. ARCHBISHOP IAKOVOS ARRIVED IN ATHENS A WEEK AGO AND IS RETURNING TO NEW YORK SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5TH. WHILE IN GREECE HE HAS TALKED MANY TIMES TO PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS, PRESIDENT TSATSOS, DEFENSE MINISTER AVEROFF, AND MANY OTHER TOP GREEK GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND PROMINENT PERSONALITIES IN THIS COUNTRY, MOST OF WHOM HE HAS KNOWN INTIMATELY FOR A LONG TIME.

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I MYSELF HAVE MET PRIVATELY WITH HIM THREE TIMES AT HIS REQUEST.

2. ARCHBISHOP IAKOVOS HAS BEEN HERE DURING A PERIOD OF INTENSE ACTIVITY IN AN EFFORT TO DEAL WITH RENEWED TENSIONS AND DANGERS IN THE AEGEAN AS A RESULT OF THE SISMIC'S JUST ANNOUNCED NEW PROGRAM OF OPERATIONS AND RESEARCH. ALTHOUGH THE OFFICIAL GREEK GOVERNMENT AND GENERAL PUBLIC REACTION TO THESE DEVELOPMENTS HAS BEEN MUTED AND GREATLY RESTRAINED, BEHIND THE SCENES THERE HAS BEEN DEEP BITTERNESS AND ANGER. ARCHBISHOP IAKOVOS ASSURES ME -- AND I BELIEVE HIM -- THAT HE HAS SOUGHT TO PLAY A CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN HELPING TO MODERATE THE REACTION IN GREECE AND TO MINIMIZE THE DIRECTION OF ANY GREEK BITTERNESS OR ANGER AGAINST THE U.S.

3. THE ARCHBISHOP INDICATED TO ME THAT HE WANTS TO AVOID ANY APPEARANCE OF BECOMING INVOLVED IN THE DOMESTIC, POLITICAL PROCESS OR CAMPAIGNS IN THE U.S. HOWEVER, I HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE IS DEFINITELY SYMPATHETIC TO THE PRESIDENT AND WHAT WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH. WHILE I DO NOT BELIEVE HE WILL TAKE ANY INITIATIVE ON HIS RETURN TO THE U.S. TO CONTACT ANYONE IN THE WHITE HOUSE OR THE DEPARTMENT, I FEEL CERTAIN HE WOULD BE MOST RECEPTIVE TO AN INITIATIVE FROM WASHINGTON AND WOULD READILY MAKE HIMSELF AVAILABLE FOR A MEETING, ON WHATEVER BASIS WAS DESIRED, TO DISCUSS HIS IMPRESSIONS OF THIS WEEK'S VISIT TO GREECE. AS A MINIMUM, IF HE IS NOT ASKED TO COME TO WASHINGTON I SHOULD THINK AN APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENT OFFICER COULD BE OFFERED TO DEBRIEF HIM IN NEW YORK. KUBISCH UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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